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Achieving a Balanced Comprehensive Plan

San Francisco Urban Design Study

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March 5, 1971

Mr. Allan Jacobs, Director
Department of City Planning
100 Larkin Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

This report focuses on achieving a balanced Comprehensive Plan for the City of San Francisco. It is the eighth and last of a series prepared by Marshall Kaplan, Gans, and Kahn; together, these reports comprise the social component of the San Francisco Urban Design Study.

This final report is directed to three aspects of achieving a socially responsive, balanced Comprehensive Plan. The first of these focuses on its definition. This definition encompasses an analysis of its need as well as its content. It also examines the important distinctions between two basically different kinds of data: data which measure the impact of planning, programming, and budgeting improvements in terms of enhanced social satisfaction; and data which merely count static facts with only the most tenuous relation to their social implications.

The second of these aspects focuses on the implementation of the socially-responsive Comprehensive Plan, without Charter reform. Accordingly, its implementation envisages the development of an Annual Strategy Statement outlining the City's near-term social goals, and the strategies for their achievement. In addition, the establishment of an Advisory Council of Neighborhoods is envisaged, to encourage greater diversity and balance in providing public services throughout the City and in its multi-differentiated neighborhoods. The establishment of a variety of Neighborhood Service Corporations and Model Streets Projects is also envisaged, to serve as the vehicle of diversity and balance which is the purpose of the Advisory Council of Neighborhoods.

Third, this final report examines San Francisco's City and County governmental structure with regard to its appropriateness to the task of achieving a socially-responsive, balanced Comprehensive Plan. Based on this examination, several significant structural reforms are recommended. Among these is one to establish an Office of Planning in the Mayor's Office. The establishment of such an Office will require Charter reform. This proposal is generally in accord with the recommendations of the Citizens' Charter Revision Committee. The establishment of a Council of Economic and Social Advisors is also recommended.

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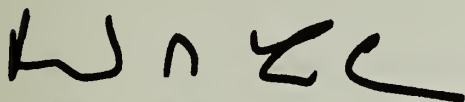
Achieving a balanced
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In the final analysis, the achievement of socially-responsive planning involves a complex process. Important steps have already been taken and are now being taken. The reforms envisaged by this report should speed the process toward achieving a balanced Comprehensive Plan for the City and County of San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H M K', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Howard M. Kahn

HMK:ar



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ABSTRACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This report contains a number of recommendations for achieving a Balanced Comprehensive Plan for San Francisco; such a Plan considers both social and physical planning issues and policies. This abstract summarizes these recommendations. Most can be implemented as process reforms, within the authority of San Francisco's Charter in its present form; several recommendations, however, will require Charter reform.

Recommendations for Implementation, Under Existing Charter

- * *That the San Francisco Department of City Planning develop and refine a system of social indicators to more reliably measure the well-being of the City's residents, as a first step toward achieving the Balanced Comprehensive Plan.*
- * *That a balanced information system be developed and refined to a degree sufficient to provide the Department of City Planning with the needed social indicators to complement the physical indicators on which it must now rely.*
- * *That the Department of City Planning extend its present review of the Capital Improvements Program to encompass review of the operating programs and services required to maintain proposed capital facilities.*
- * *That an Annual Strategy Statement be prepared by the Department for inclusion in the State of the City Message delivered annually by the Mayor.*
- * *That this Annual Strategy Statement outline the City's near-term plans and programs for achieving the condition of social well-being described in the Mayor's State of the City Message.*
- * *That an Advisory Council of Neighborhoods be established, based on a number of constituent Neighborhood Councils, to advise the Department of City Planning.*
- * *That the constituent Neighborhood Councils would conduct frequent Social Reconnaissance Surveys of neighborhood attitudes and satisfaction, toward enhancing socially-responsive planning and providing more differentiated public services.*

- * That the City sanction the establishment of a variety of Neighborhood Service Corporations, to directly provide appropriate community services under delegated performance contracts negotiated with particular City departments.
- * That the City sanction the establishment of a number of Model Street Projects, each confined to approximately one block in area, to demonstrate the impact of public facilities and services innovations on social well-being.

Recommendations for Implementation, Based on Charter Reform

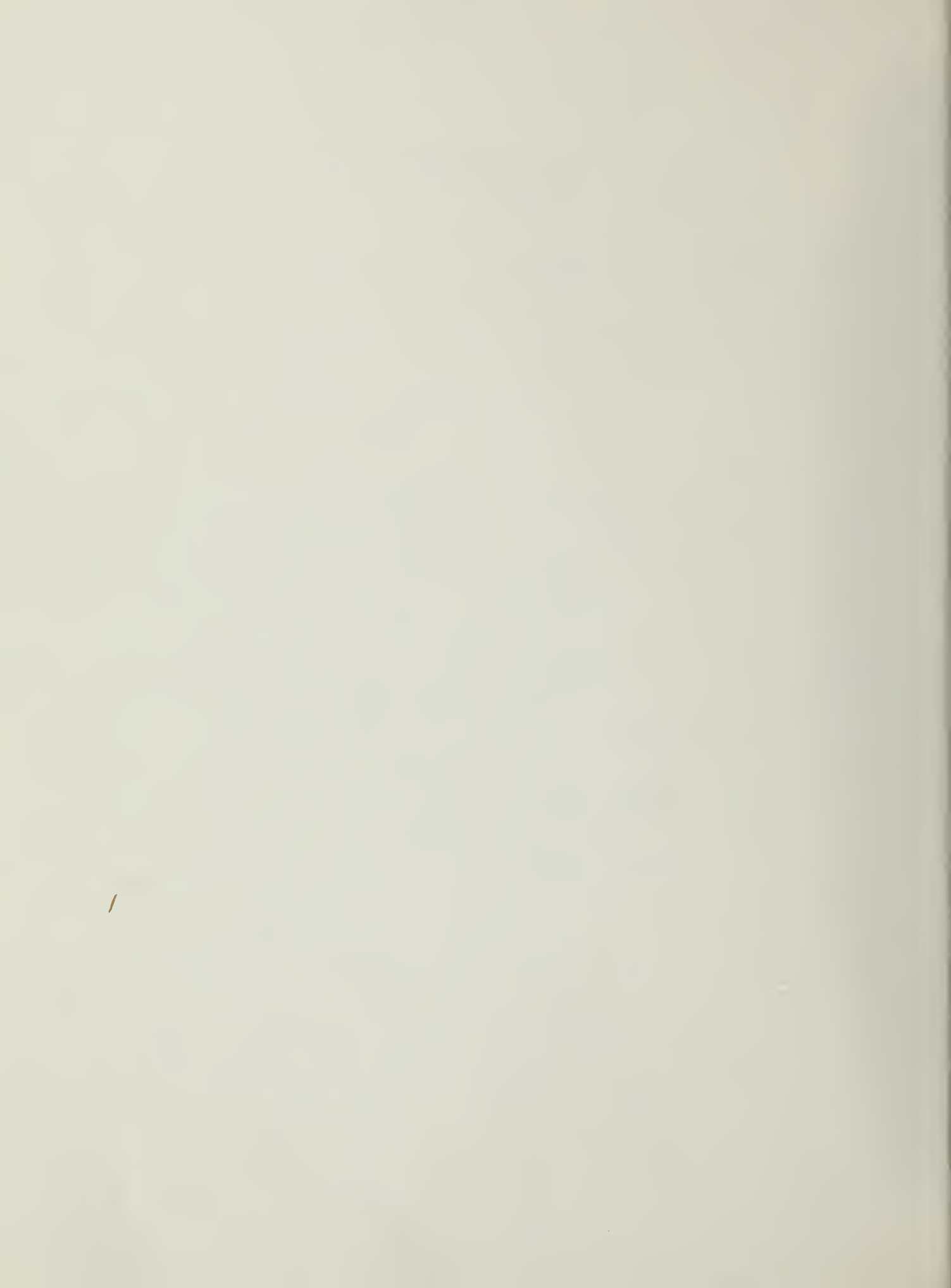
- * That the Department of City Planning be reconstituted as the Office of Planning in the Mayor's Office, to improve executive over-all supervision, review, and evaluation for both the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors.
- * That an Office of Budget be established in the Mayor's Office, to centralize and coordinate budgetary planning and programming.
- * That a Council of Economic and Social Advisors be established, to assist the Mayor on a continuing basis, by providing balanced insight into City problems and proposing specific steps to improve conditions.

ACHIEVING A BALANCED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE BALANCED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Balanced Comprehensive Plan has resisted definition, in part because of the complexity of its subject matter. In resisting definition, it is axiomatic that it has resisted implementation as well. As a result, there has been inadequate attention to the development of appropriate social indicators on which to base socially-responsive planning and programming, and evaluate its impact. This, then, completes the system of neglect. The Balanced Comprehensive Plan resists definition because of its complexity; its complexity discourages its implementation; in the absence of the imperative to implement, the social indicators on which the Plan can be based fail development; this leaves the Balanced Comprehensive Plan complex and ill-defined.

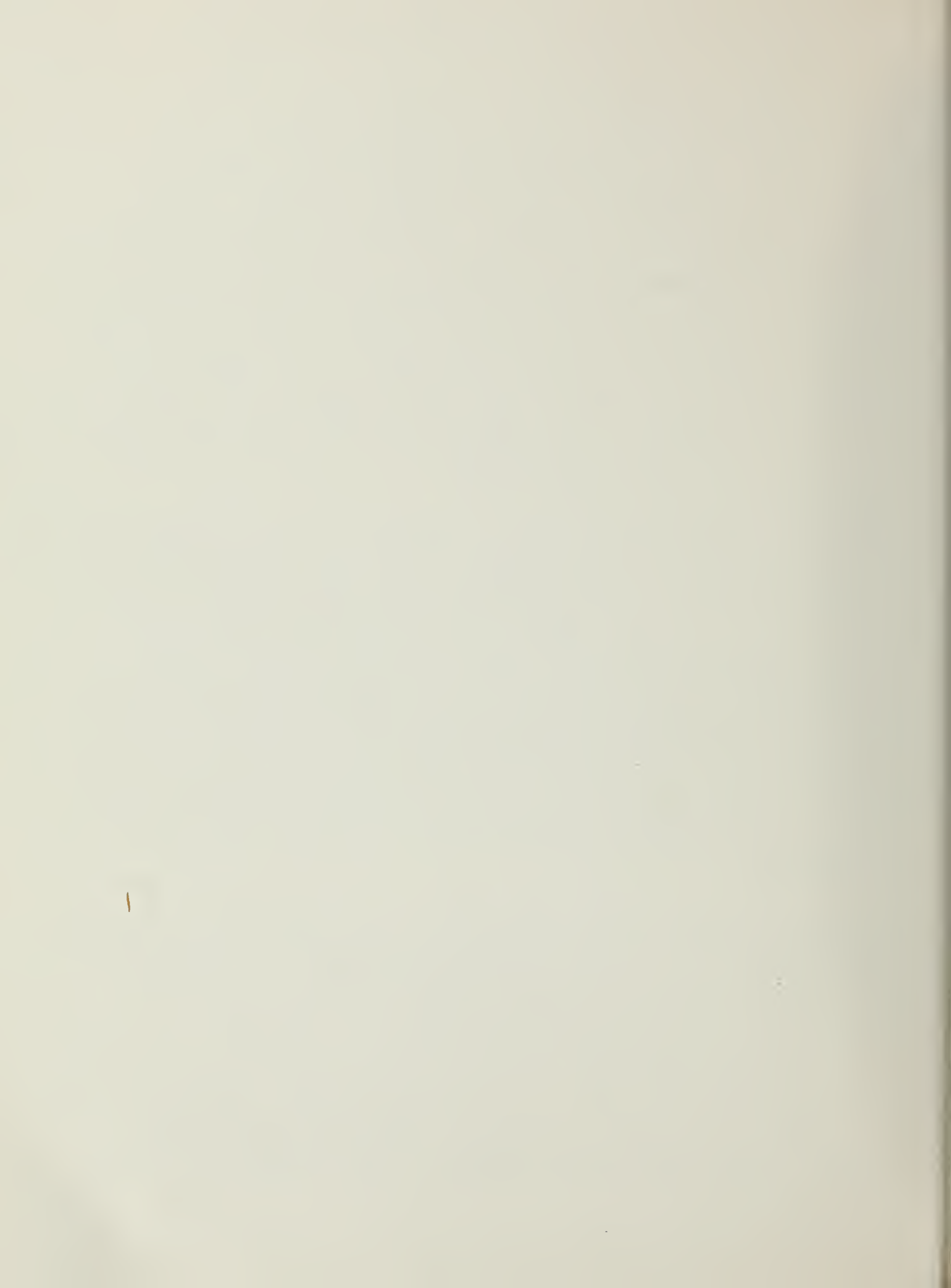
Need for a Balanced Comprehensive Plan - Each month, this Nation has its economic pulse taken and the findings are announced with the appropriate solemnity to the occasion. Employment is found to be up or down; the rate of production is similarly examined, as are bank deposits, interest rates, credit, business failures, costs of living, and a host of other related variables. Based on these data, the Nation is found to be healthy or unhealthy, improving or regressing. Based on these data as well, such national regulatory agencies as the Federal Reserve Board can recommend and affect the implementation of certain fiscal and monetary measures to enhance the Nation's economic health.



No such mechanisms, however, exist on a national, or even on a state or local level, to affect the Nation's social health. Even the indicators with which to measure the Nation's social health are lacking. It should be apparent enough that full employment, high production rates, substantial bank deposits, low interest rates, ready credit, few business failures, and a stable cost of living do not assure with certainty a healthy social climate. The Great Depression of the '30s was characterized by high unemployment and extensive physical deprivation. Nonetheless, it appears to have suffered little of the wide-spread social alienation and violence increasingly characteristic of this and the previous decade.

Among the concerns of American life is a growing sense that our national and local priorities are irrationally skewed, that our goals inadequately reflect the vastness of our needs. There is a general feeling that the quality of life is declining, even within a context of growing affluence. Yet the outlines of that decline are blurred. Lacking adequate indicators of success or failure in meeting social goals, planning tends to be haphazard and inconsistent. Social programs not only fail to fit together into a coherent whole, but frequently resemble a crazy-quilt pattern of overlap, omission, and inefficiency.

Moreover, reliance is placed on indicators which have only limited relationship to objectives. Thus, in part the quality of public education is measured by the number of students who attend its schools. By the same token, in part its quality is measured by the number of students who are able to read at some apparently appropriate level. In fact, of course, neither may measure anything more than the enforcement of truancy laws or improved test-taking ability. These indicators do not measure increased curiosity, imagination, or a child's

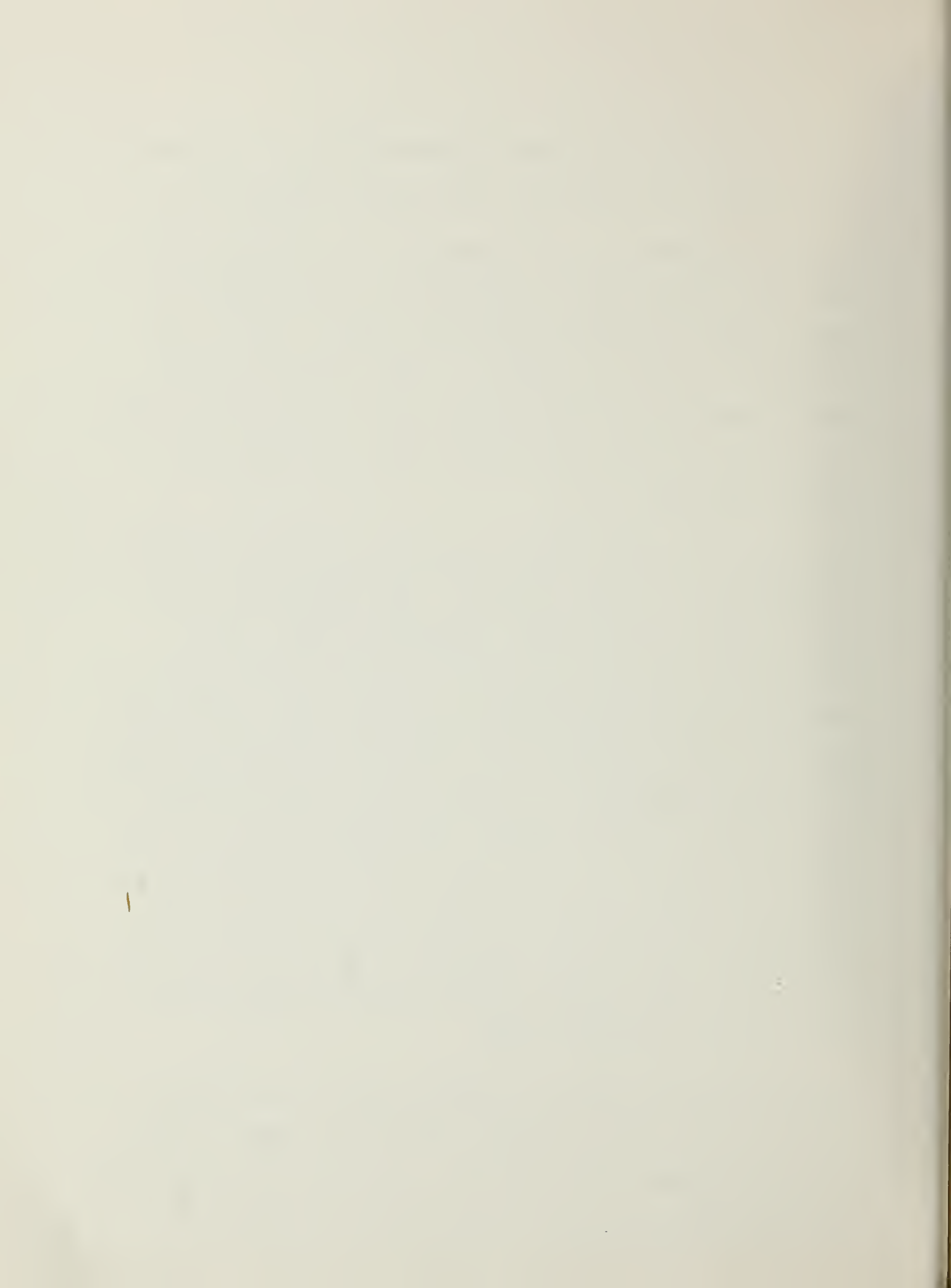


sense of wonder; nor do they measure the degree to which an educational system responds to the rhythms of a child's natural learning pattern.

Similarly, unemployment rates are measured, but these statistics tell little about whether a job is a source of pride and achievement, or a degrading chore that heightens alienation and apathy. Rates of crime and numbers of policemen are counted, but these measures tell little about the general sense of safety of the citizens, or the degree to which policemen and the policed alike view each other with friendly trust or corrosive suspicion.

To the extent that irrelevant facts are measured, conclusions drawn may be inappropriate and counter-productive. Thus, measuring only traffic flow may suggest street-widening or signalization changes; but this measure by itself ignores the deteriorative effect of such changes on the social system of a neighborhood's residential integrity and functionality. And, lacking indicators, it is difficult to evaluate improvements, both planned and implemented. If a new educational program is adopted, does it result in increased employment and meaningful work? Does a new health care program merely increase the fragmentation of health care, and encourage the provision of crisis-oriented assistance? Unless answers can be found to these and similar questions, planning will scarcely embody more than costly guesswork. And the evaluation of planning will be similarly based on guesswork as well.

The point is that the Balanced Comprehensive Plan, and the concomitant evaluation of the program assistance flowing from it, requires a greater attention to systemic inter-relationships. It is almost past dispute that traffic planning has too long and narrowly focused on moving people in



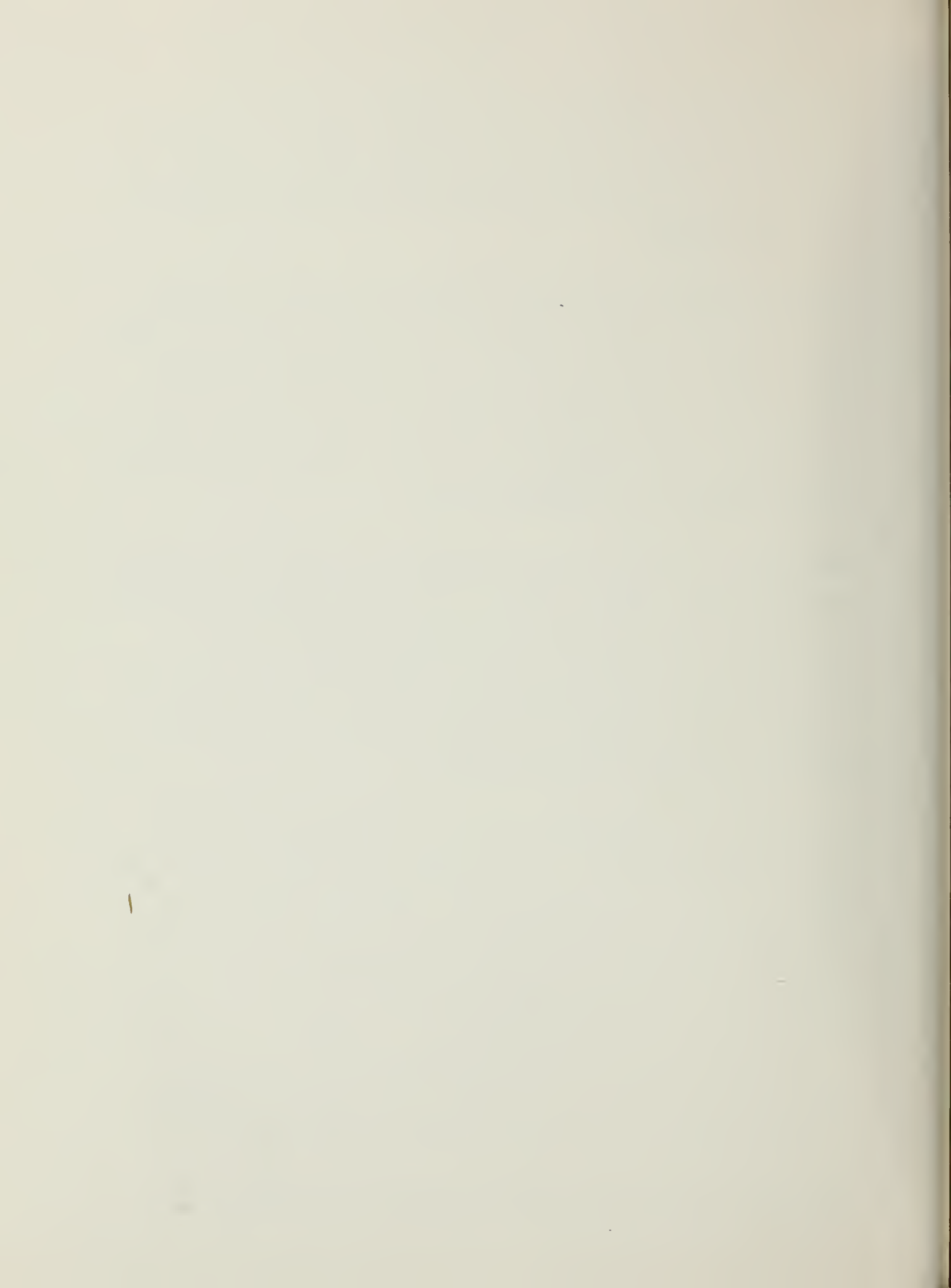
private vehicles. The result is that there has been insufficient focus on systemic concerns for neighborhood residents around and through which traffic flows, or on inter-modal alternatives to the private automobiles, such as mass transit.

This process has too often evolved a planning and programming approach which tends to be fragmented, with different program agencies often implementing related programs which reflect policy established in isolated vacuums. This is partially due to unrealistic reliance on the oversight capabilities of chief executives and legislative councils in the balancing of public management and budgetary processes.

Significantly, this problem of undue reliance on executive and legislative oversight has been endemic to Federal, as well as state and local planning processes; nor has San Francisco been spared this undue reliance. In some ways, however, San Francisco and cities like it probably suffer all the more, by reason of narrow restrictions placed on the use of Federal and state categorical assistance programs.

The result of such categorical assistance is diminished trade-offs in policy and program planning. It is axiomatic, after all, that the Federal Highway Trust Fund encourages only highway construction, and neglects the inter-modal benefits of other forms of transportation. The almost sole reliance on metropolitan financing for the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District is a graphic case in point; by contrast, the construction of much of San Francisco's metropolitan freeway system is 90 percent Federally-financed, and the construction of the proposed San Francisco Bay Southern Crossing Bridge would be wholly financed by the State.

But actually, the enforced-fragmentation and pre-categorization goes much



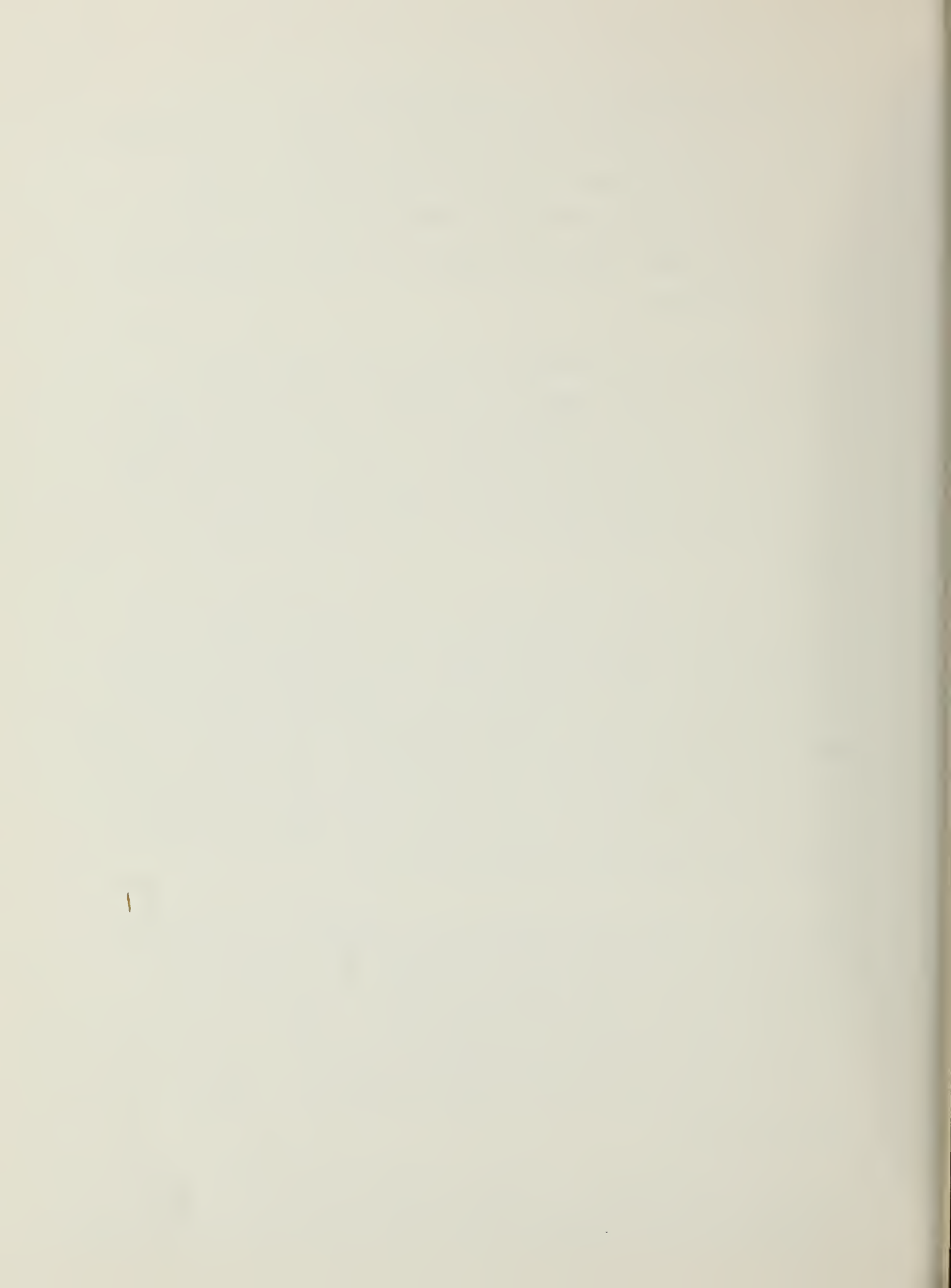
deeper than anything the use of the Federal Highway Trust Fund or State financing for the Southern Crossing even begins to suggest. Thus, Federal and State matching formulae, City revenue-bond commitments, separate School District budgeting, and similar constraints leave that portion of San Francisco's budget which can be responsive to new and changing needs very limited indeed.

This fact explains, in some degree, the reason that a great many of San Francisco's residents appear to be concerned lest the City no longer works for them. There is a concern that the City focuses undue attention on certain of its seemingly more parochial functions, while a broad range of needs desired by Middle San Franciscans suffer various degrees of neglect.

One social implication of this neglect is that it tends to heighten the resistance of these Middle San Franciscans to the legitimate and pressing needs of the City's poor. The result is that significant segments of its middle-class and poor fail to perceive themselves as being greatly assisted by City or City-related services, such as education, fire, police, garbage collection, street-cleaning, traffic control, mass transit, and similar services. Both can become alienated in the process.

San Francisco's middle-class have frequently responded to this alienation by leaving the City for the suburbs, or barring that alternative, by withdrawing into ever tighter and more isolated enclaves; the poor are seldom able to avail themselves of either of these choices. This is the imperative of achieving a socially-responsive planning, programming, and budgeting process.

The task of such planning is imposing; it must include such City concerns as education, health and welfare, safety and crime prevention, transportation,

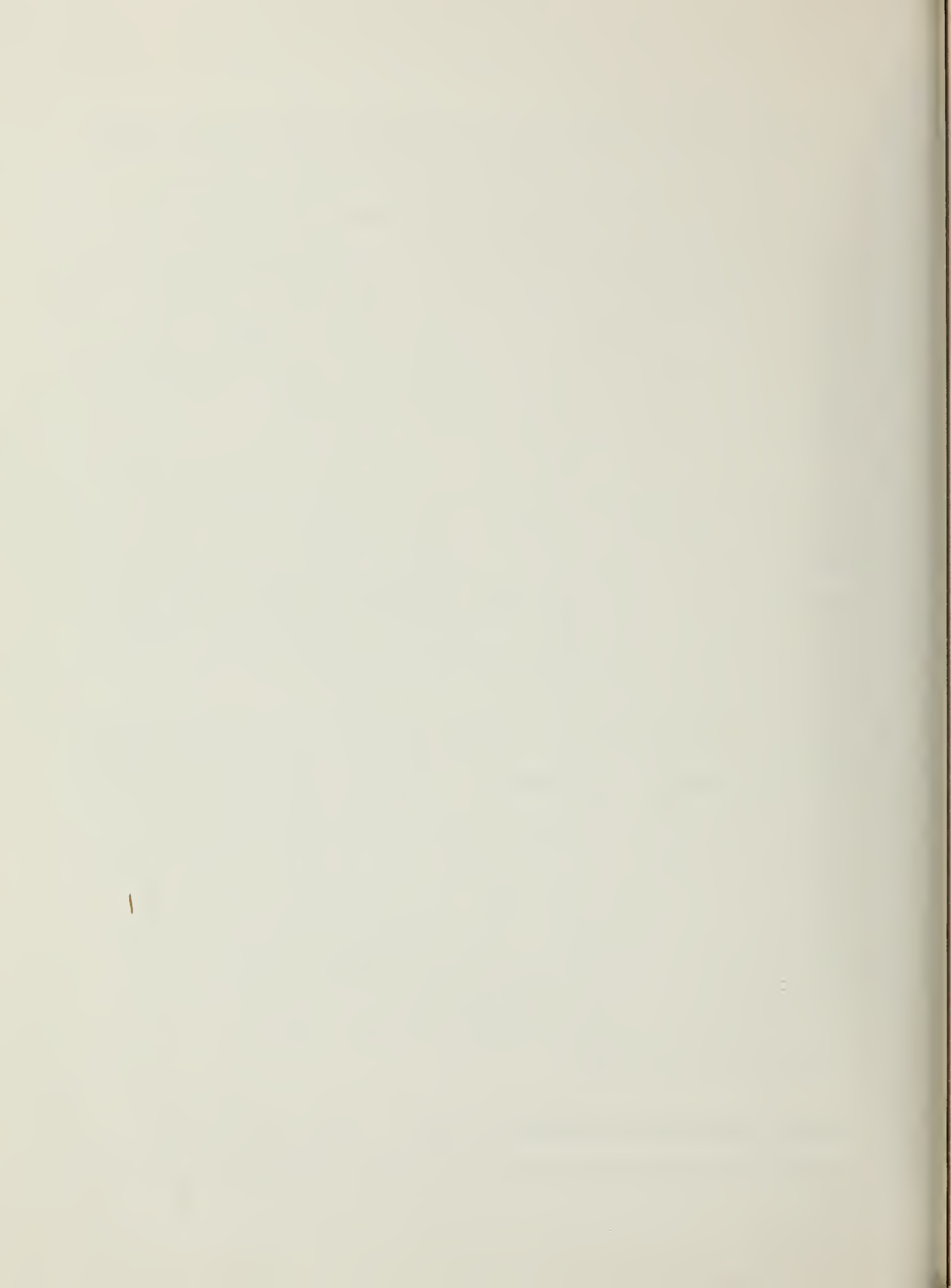


recreation, culture, neighborhood conservation and rehabilitation, housing construction, commerce and economic growth, and full-employment as well as land use control and the shaping of urban design. This diversity of planning concerns has been generally met by increased specialization. Technical expertise has developed in each of these areas, and program decisions have increasingly become compartmentalized. A largely unrelated series of narrow perceptions has dominated the task of comprehensive planning, effectively enhancing its ultimate fragmentation.

Given the complexity and inter-dependence of the urban system, the need for balanced comprehensive planning is clear. Planning should reflect essential awareness of the City as a system of broad social and economic linkages. Functional programs ought to complement each other, and support a set of City-wide goals; these City-wide goals should, however, be appropriately cognizant of San Francisco's neighborhoods.

The costs and benefits of each component program should be measured against the broadest possible considerations. In this way, the barriers of specialization separating City functions and services can be diminished, and the trade-off of different costs and benefits enhanced. This vision of comprehensiveness is not inconsistent with the use of technical expertise in urban planning and programming. It does, however, affirm a central goal: *that city planning must be integrated if it is to be relevant. It must consider physical, social, and economic objectives and unite them in a Balanced Comprehensive Plan.*

Content of the Balanced Comprehensive Plan - At present, there is no adequate set of indicators with which to gauge the economic and social



health of the City. This is no less true for the fact that all indicators tend to be highly value-laden devices. The traditional reliance on economic indicators is itself value-laden, although their choice does not disregard subtle and sensitive social issues. Rather, the reliance on economic indicators is based on the assumption that the social well-being of a people is reflected in its economic health alone, and that the social responsiveness of the economic marketplace is complete.

Such an assumption may have been appropriate to a true market economy; but neither contemporary America nor contemporary San Francisco are true market economies in classic terms. Neither possess the characteristics of a great multiplicity of producers and consumers in continuing and responsive competition with each other; both possess the characteristics of large public and private institutions which can readily resist the pressures of change. The mere fact alone that economic indicators continue to play such an important role in measuring contemporary well-being and shaping ameliorative programs by itself is indicative of an institutional resistance to change quite at variance with the vision of a wholly responsive market economy.

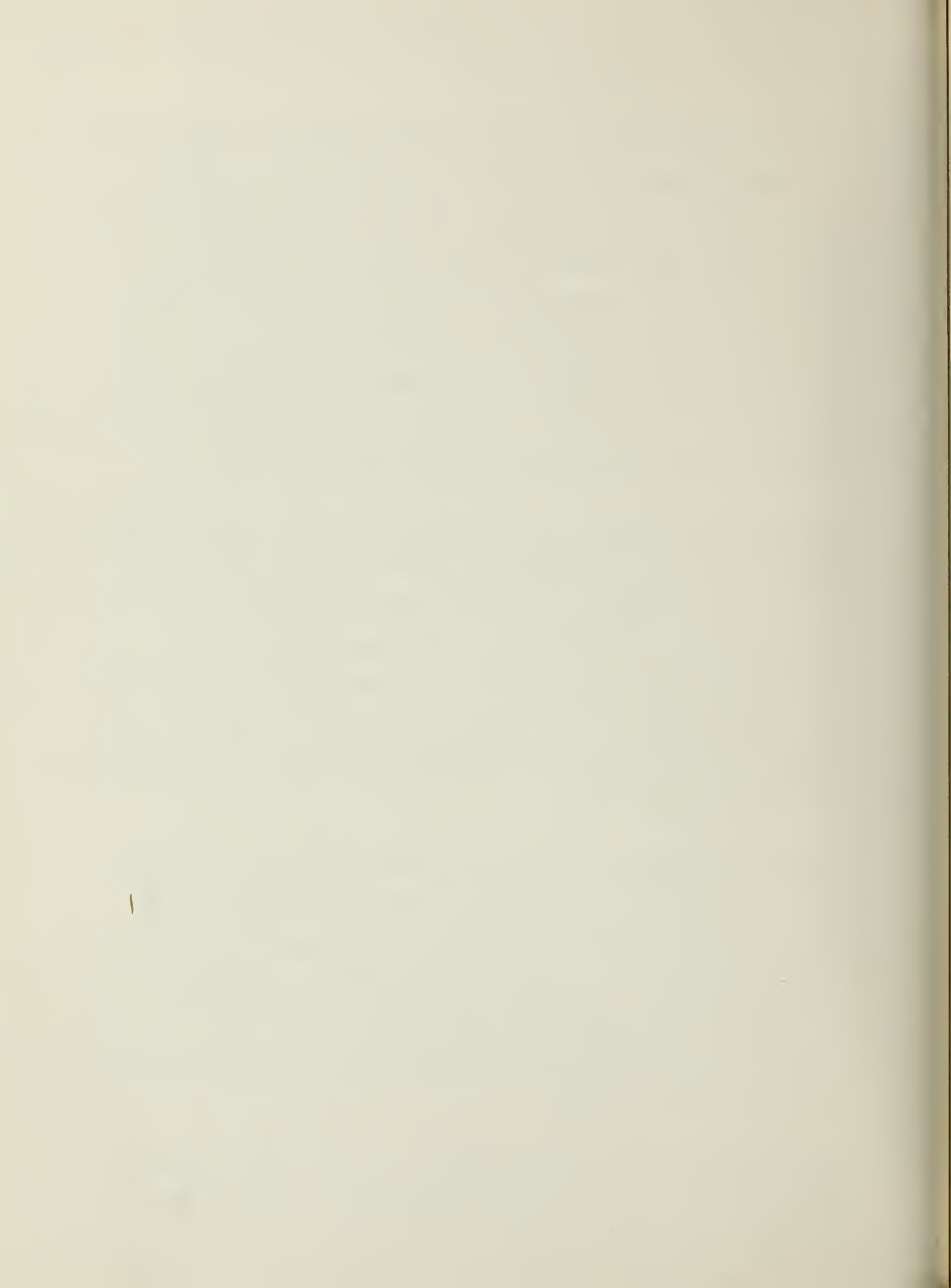
In addition, the continued reliance on economic indicators reflects a failure to give credence to the present sophistication of the social sciences, and their potential for the measurement of a people's well-being. In the absence of such recognition, indicators tend to be chosen for the simplicity of their conceptual bases. Thus dollars are counted, rather than satisfaction; school rooms are counted, rather than learning. In this context, even the social sciences themselves tend to focus on non-measurement, largely removed from the crucible of difficult relevant to the pressing social issues of the times.

This is not to deny the fact that to the degree indicators are value-laden, most probably diminishes their relevance as well, and that accordingly it might be better to place less reliance on them. This does suggest, however, that the values these indicators reflect should be fully understood and subject to constant re-appraisal, lest conduct or activities continue to be measured against standards which are no longer relevant. The present inordinate reliance on economic indicators and related measures of input characteristics, such as school rooms built, students graduated, and miles of highway constructed, provides a graphic illustration of this point.

The inadequacy of highway construction mileage, as a measure of well-being, has been particularly well documented; and while this has not nearly mandated a basic re-thinking of its benefits, the growing support for inter-modal trade-offs in transportation planning suggests that the essential point has been made. This leaves the not inconsiderable task of developing a new constituency for inter-modal transportation planning yet to be accomplished, but San Francisco has probably gone farther in this regard than any city in the country.

All this should suggest the importance of developing reliable social indicators. Without them, inappropriate activities may be measured, inappropriate programs supported, and the provision of relevant and responsive public services denied. At the same time, the development of an important new constituency for responsive change may be denied as well. It is for these reasons that the choice of social indicators, and the care with which they are measured, is so important.

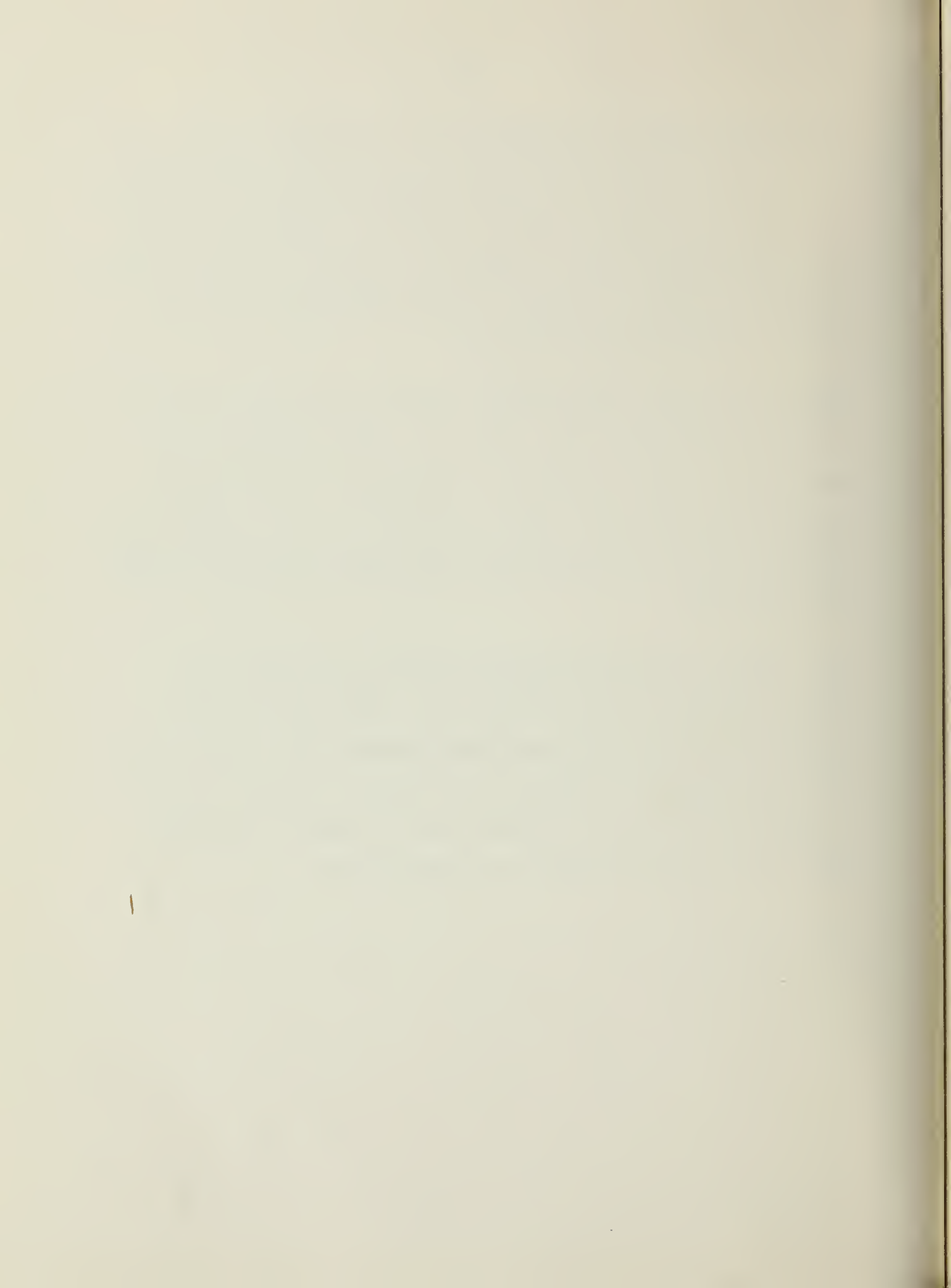
Social indicators do not, however, exist in a vacuum. Their relevance is their very rationale. This relevance can be assured in the thoughtful



development of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan. The task of creating such a Plan demands an initial distinction between policy goals and achievement objectives. Policy goals should define the basic assumptions and values which shape the urban system. Achievement objectives deal less with these assumptions than with the existing near-term capability of the urban system to accomplish these policy goals.

Together, policy goals and achievement objectives will form the basis of the Balanced Comprehensive Plan. They will reflect a basic vision of the City as it might or ought to be, an indication of the achievement objectives that must be met if basic policy goals are to be attained; and social indicators are the indices with which these achievement objectives can be evaluated.

But to define the Balanced Comprehensive Plan is not to assure that socially-responsive planning will take place. New mechanisms must be created to define policy goals and achievement objectives, and to select the social indicators on which they will be based. And, most important, a planning structure must be fashioned which is capable of translating goals into programs, objectives into delivery systems.



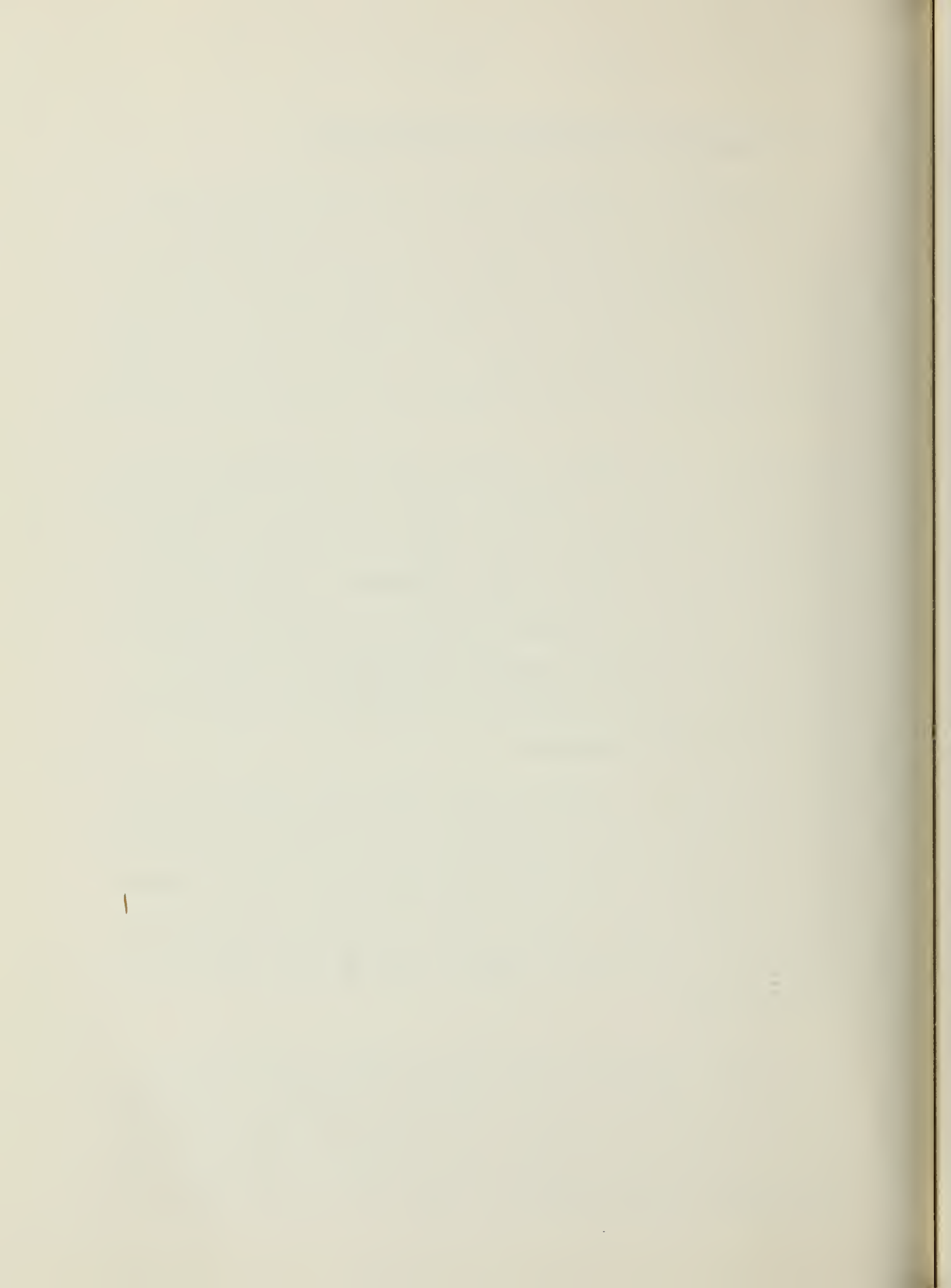
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BALANCED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The implementation of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan partially achieved within the existing planning structure of the City, without Charter reform. Already the Department of City Planning has begun to concern itself with the definition of social as well as physical planning goals. The framing of position papers covering a range of City systemic functions has begun, and these papers can be used as a foundation for further policy definition.

Although much of the effect of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan is dependent upon the degree to which a planning staff can anticipate inter-departmental concurrence, the definition of policy goals and achievement objectives can have considerable impact in and of themselves. Comprehensiveness in planning is not just an attractive theory, but an immediate governmental need. Broad comprehensive planning has not been wholly successful in San Francisco, and this omission has created difficulties for both the Mayor and City department heads.

Accordingly, there is little doubt that at least some departments of the City will readily welcome the assistance of the planning staff in developing balanced policy goals and achievement objectives. Moreover, every effort should be made to develop cooperative working relationships with departments, so that technical planning assistance can be effective on a continuing basis.

This suggests that there should be a high-priority focus on the inter-departmental problems of capital improvements programming. The San Francisco Department of City Planning has the present Charter responsibility of preparing a Capital Improvements Program for the consideration of City



officials. City departments are required to provide information in assisting it in preparing this Program; however, a rather consistent failure throughout the country has been the failure to adequately consider the operating costs which will be required by these capital improvements, and San Francisco has not wholly escaped this failure as well.

The Department of City Planning would appear to be within the scope of its legal authority, in preparing San Francisco's Capital Improvements Program, to request that City departments provide it with information on related operating services and costs. Such information on operating services and costs would enhance the likelihood that planning will occur in the context of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan.

To the degree that City departments began to respond in such a manner, the beginning steps would be taken toward the implementation of a socially-responsive planning, programming, and budgeting system in San Francisco. This would provide a format and budget procedure which could be readily extended to encompass the entire City management process. This momentum would be given added impetus insofar as the Mayor requested City departments to develop their budget proposals within the framework of a balanced set of policy goals and achievement objectives. This request could be made under existing Charter authority.

By the same token, to the degree that these steps are not taken, comprehensive planning is likely to remain fragmented and confused, and operational difficulties are likely to increase. Departmental programs conceived in a planning vacuum are often inadequate, cumbersome, and inconsistent with the programs of other departments. In addition, they may be resented in the very neighborhoods these programs are intended to serve. Mayoral

support of dysfunctional systems often results in direct political damage; the Mayor becomes increasingly vulnerable to charges that his Administration is characterized by drift, indecision, confusion, and even conflict.

A Balanced Comprehensive Plan can, therefore, have both substantive and procedural impact. First, in the degree to which it clearly addresses policy goals, defines achievement objectives, and suggests social indicators, such a Plan can improve the substantive planning activities of both the Mayor and City line departments. Program development within and among City departments can be better integrated, yielding obvious program results; the more departmental projects mesh with one another, the less the City will be plagued by the dysfunctional conflict and over-lap of public services.

Second, the very definition of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan can have an impact upon the operational procedures of City government. The existence of such a Plan will encourage and raise the level of debate regarding San Francisco's future. Policy goals and achievement objectives will challenge departments to be more self-critical, to respond in kind to a balanced planning process. Encouraged by outside debate over their organizing assumptions, City departments will likely give greater consideration to policy definition, and articulate more clearly the implicit goals upon which they act. Neighborhood groups which are dissatisfied with systemic inadequacies, but dilute their power with scatter-shot opposition, will be able to depend on a balanced planning process to focus their concern for future City programming.

The public nature of such a planning process would also have considerable impact. This nature would be embodied in the issuance of an Annual Strategy

Statement as part of the State of the City Message delivered annually by the Mayor. To the degree that the Department of City Planning focused on positive policies for implementing a Balanced Comprehensive Plan, its influence in opposing undesirable physical and social development projects would be increased. The comprehensiveness and sensitivity of the Plan could also improve the Department's working relationships with other departments.

Additionally, in those instances in which City departments were concerned with the need for improved monitoring and evaluation of their projects, the employment of social indicators developed by the Department of City Planning would be invaluable. Moreover, insofar as the social indicators evaluated the impact of City departments on social satisfaction, dysfunctional City departments and programs would be provided early warning measures of difficulties. By the same token, highly functional City departments would be better able to expand upon their achievements, given a set of acceptable social indicators. Such indications of achievements would be the more objective and less suspect for having been developed by the Department of City Planning, removed from line responsibility for the provision of public services.

Of course, the development of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan, and its accompanying Annual Strategy Statement, could be threatening to departments and constituencies which are touched by failure and wedded to the status quo. But the Plan would be continually tested by opposition and critical debate; that, in fact, is part of the nature of its relevance. Thus, if planning for San Francisco is to be no more than a narrow and harmless pastime, a tool is needed to help the City take a hard look at itself. The Balanced Comprehensive Plan should be that tool.

The issue of restructuring San Francisco's planning process should confront two basic problems. Both of these problems are suggested by the Social Reconnaissance Surveys conducted throughout the City, as part of the San Francisco Urban Design Study. The first of these is indicated to the degree that there exists a pervasive sense, at the neighborhood level, that a number of the functional systems of the City are failing its residents. The second of these is indicated to the degree that there exists a growing alienation between neighborhood residents and the public institutions which are intended to serve them.

Accordingly, the effort to shape balanced comprehensive planning should be directed, at least in part, to establishing a mechanism which will balance city-wide and neighborhood objectives within a single planning process. One important mechanism for balancing city-wide and neighborhood objectives could take the form of an Advisory Council of Neighborhoods, comprised of representatives drawn from among constituent Neighborhood Councils throughout the City.

Advisory Council of Neighborhoods - The Social Reconnaissance Surveys with neighborhood residents indicated, that for many San Franciscans, the City is inadequately responsive. The alienation of the poor is vivid evidence that urban life has failed them. The affluent have also become more dissatisfied with the life of the City; their move to the suburbs is graphic testimony to their dissatisfaction. But is within the middle-class that the growing disaffection with the urban environment can best be traced. Here, Social Reconnaissance Surveys revealed a growing sense of alarm about the quality of life in San Francisco.

The implicit focus of the Surveys was the concern of San Francisco residents

for the state of their physical environment. The themes of dissatisfaction were widespread. In a number of sections of the City, residents expressed the sense that their neighborhoods were decaying; that property was insufficiently maintained; that streets were over-crowded and dangerous; that parks were badly planned, and inadequately maintained and supervised; that sidewalks and streets were littered with garbage, broken bottles, and abandoned cars. Yet the concerns of those interviewed went far beyond the need for improved physical planning. Persistent themes emerged. Residents felt that a wide range of public services was failing them, that their needs were ignored by those in positions of power, and that they had no effective means of influencing the public decisions that touch their lives.

Often the concerns which most trouble neighborhoods do not require massive commitments of new resources; these concerns could be easily resolved by a responsive and flexible set of departmental programs. Yet it is precisely these qualities which a bureaucracy typically lacks. The departments of local government are increasingly distant, slow, and rigid. During the era of the political machine, the neighborhood political structure gave the individual a degree of direct access to government services. Lateral invasion into the bureaucracy was possible; when city departments failed to deliver needed services, the ward heeler provided an alternate channel to remedial action. With the collapse of the machine, and the further concentration of bureaucratic power, individual residents and neighborhoods have become less able to communicate with their elected officials. Lateral access to government has largely disappeared.

To provide a planning mechanism that recaptures individual and neighborhood initiative, the establishment of an Advisory Council of Neighborhoods is recommended. The Advisory Council would itself be based on a system of

decentralized Neighborhood Councils. Such Councils would be organized in each of thirty to forty San Francisco neighborhoods.

The planning assumption of the constituent Neighborhood Councils would be to decentralize the provision of City services, and -- at the same time -- improve the central flow of information on which the Department of City Planning would base its programming and budgeting responsibilities. Neighborhood Councils, however, could have delegated responsibility for conducting Social Reconnaissance Surveys. These Surveys, conducted on a regular and frequent basis, would provide an initial reading of the degree to which City services were responsive within the neighborhoods of the City. Since constituent Neighborhood Councils would be community-controlled institutions, they would provide the local mechanism with which to monitor the performance of systemic functions.

The role of Neighborhood Councils need not be limited to monitoring and evaluation, however. They would play a direct part in the planning of the neighborhood itself. Each Council would be responsible for preparing an advisory neighborhood plan; such plans would encompass neighborhood development priorities and service delivery mechanisms. The Councils would be encouraged to propose innovations and new programs aimed at meeting critical neighborhood needs. Just as the definition of policy goals and achievement objectives by the Department of City Planning would encourage City departments to conceive a vision of the City as a whole, the advisory neighborhood plans developed by the constituent Councils would reflect a decentralized vision of neighborhoods as City sub-units.

The Council of Neighborhoods could have two basic functions. It could initially serve as a distributor of technical assistance resources for

constituent Neighborhood Councils. Either functional technical experts, or technical assistance funds, could be assigned by the Council of Neighborhoods to support neighborhood planning activities. The Council of Neighborhoods could also be responsible for eliciting a set of broad policies from all the neighborhood plans. This function would be the converse of the role of the Department of City Planning. Thus, while the Department would operate from an oversight point-of-view, to establish basic policy priorities and program achievement objectives for all San Francisco, the Council of Neighborhoods would operate from a decentralized point-of-view, to review plans developed by each neighborhood community and abstract general policies from them.

The advisory statement of goals and objectives generated by the Council of Neighborhoods would be valuable for comparison with that of the Department of City Planning. Each set of goals and objectives would present a different view or vision of the City, and the contrast between the two would encourage debate and the re-thinking of program priorities.

The Department of City Planning and the Advisory Council of Neighborhoods would have shared responsibility for developing the City's Balanced Comprehensive Plan. The broad outlines of the Plan would be derived from the long-range development plans of the Department. Five to ten-year policy goals would be a partial basis for the Balanced Comprehensive Plan. Constituent Neighborhood Councils, through the device of their neighborhood plans, would propose detailed capital and services improvement schemes for each neighborhood. Such proposals from each constituent Neighborhood Council would be resolved within the framework of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan.

To some extent, responsibility for the components of such a Plan could be divided between the Department of City Planning and the constituent Neighborhood Councils. In the functional area of transportation, for example, the Department would set general policy goals for the future development of San Francisco's transportation networks. The general location of bus lines would be set by the Department, together with the Municipal Railway. The detailed location of bus routes within a neighborhood could then be left for definition by the appropriate constituent Neighborhood Council. Council representatives would indicate which streets should most logically be designed, if bus routes are to serve the priority needs of the neighborhood.

To propose that division of responsibility is possible between the Department of City Planning and the constituent Neighborhood Councils is not to suggest that priority disputes will not arise. To the extent that the Neighborhood Councils, and the combined Advisory Council of Neighborhoods, disagree with the vision of the City expressed in the policy goals of the Department, conflict is inevitable. This process recommendation is not predicated upon the assumption that the City can be governed by consensus. Instead, it recognizes that basic differences ought naturally to exist between the departments of City government and neighborhoods which are served by those departments.

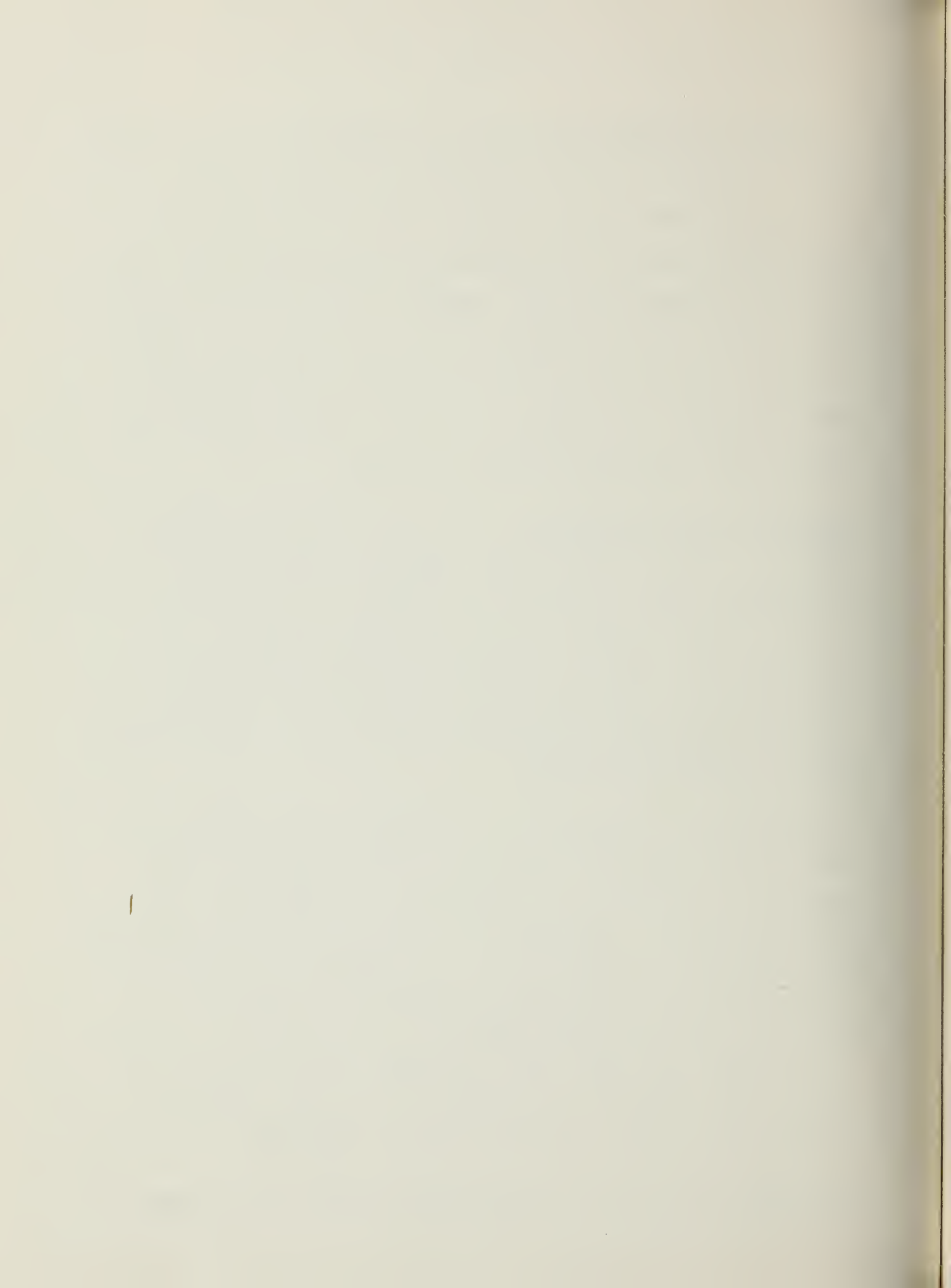
Disagreements develop, and different visions of the City are fostered. This is a healthy function of city life, the more so in a city as variegated as is San Francisco. Thus, this recommendation to establish an Advisory Council of Neighborhoods is based upon a recognition that certain conflicts already exist in the City, and that these conflicts can be as much a sign of vitality as of alienation.

By creating dual planning responsibility in the Department of City Planning and the Neighborhood Councils, policy goals and achievement objectives should develop within a system of dynamic tension. The centralized program development goals of City Administration should constantly be tested by a series of neighborhood plans. Ultimate resolution of policy conflict would rest with the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, but the very presence of a dynamic planning model would encourage debate, modification and responsive compromise. These results do not look to an end to conflict, but they may signal an important step away from despair.

Neighborhood Service Corporations - Another device which can be used to address both systemic dysfunction and neighborhood alienation is that of the Neighborhood Service Corporation. The Corporations can be utilized to provide a substantive vehicle for the differentiated delivery of public services which the constituent Neighborhood Councils should encourage; such Corporations can also be established without regard to the establishment of the Neighborhood Councils.

Neighborhood Service Corporations would be organized at the neighborhood level, and would contract with appropriate City departments to provide the various services which they would otherwise directly provide. Performance standards would be maintained by the City departments, but responsibility for actually providing services would be delegated to the Corporations. Membership or ownership of these Corporations would be limited to the neighborhood residents they serve. Thus, each Neighborhood Service Corporation would be clearly identified as the creature of a particular neighborhood, and would serve a function similar to a community cooperative.

A Corporation would agree to furnish specified services at a cost roughly



equivalent to that of existing services directly provided by City departments. It could operate in the same way as a City contractor which provided public services. The Corporation would be responsible for hiring its own staff to perform the contract services, or for selecting a suitable sub-contractor.

At the end of the contract year, all or a portion of the difference between the contract amount and the Corporation's actual expenses could be distributed to its members. This surplus could be distributed either in the form of cash rebates, or in the form of new neighborhood amenities, such as mini-parks, street planting, or day-care center services.

For example, one of the myriad problems plaguing schools is the constant vandalism that diverts enormous sums from substantive educational activities. Both security and repair costs are constant items in a school budget. A Neighborhood Service Corporation could contract with the Board of Education to provide school security and repair damage caused by vandalism. Actual repair costs could likely be lowered with the use of neighborhood labor. But, more important, vandalism itself could be reduced. Since neighborhoods would have a direct monetary interest in keeping repair costs low, neighborhood pressure would be brought to bear to diminish intentional school damage.

Neighborhood Service Corporation members would be more likely to ostracize vandals, and it could soon become an implicit neighborhood code that theft or destruction of schools was unacceptable. Violation of the code would be an attack upon the neighborhood as much as on the school, and would be less likely tolerated. Given the greater familiarity with the

neighborhood of community-based security workers, vandals could be traced and punished more easily. As vandalism and theft dropped, the Neighborhood Service Corporation would reap larger profits; these could be distributed in cash or perhaps used to create a special neighborhood cultural program in the protected school.

Many delegations of responsibility to Neighborhood Service Corporations can currently be made within the existing regulations of City departments. Other delegations may require enabling legislation, but do not necessitate revision of the City Charter. Experimentation with the concept of the Neighborhood Service Corporation can have immediate impact on a variety of planning goals. It can involve neighborhood residents in the solution of neighborhood problems; encourage the coordination of City services in the neighborhoods; increase the efficiency and responsiveness of neighborhood services; and provide jobs, training, and financial rewards to neighborhood residents.

Model Street Projects - Still another method by which the evolution of a network of Neighborhood Councils could be encouraged is to apply the concept of the Neighborhood Service Corporation to neighborhood planning activities. An example of this type of decentralized planning is the Model Street Project.

A Model Street Project could involve, among other things, the preparation of highly detailed working plans for the improvement of the public right-of-way and related internal public and private areas on as little as a single block; larger areas could, of course, employ the vehicle of the Model Street Project as well. Project planning would be accomplished in close consultation with the residents living in the area served. A

street, one block in length, may be especially appropriate to certain projects, in order to insure manageability of design, intensive resident participation, funding, and implementation.

Block planning would be short-term, rather than long. It would focus upon the immediate transformation of the street into a neighborhood asset, and would typically not require massive new resource allocation. Innovations could initially tend to be physical, emphasizing street planting, replacement of utility poles with underground wiring, the creation of mini-parks and mini-plazas, the closing of the streets to traffic, and the rehabilitation of existing structures.

Yet social innovations could also suggest themselves, and could broaden the scope of street planning. In neighborhoods with a high concentration of young children, a single block might well support a day-care center, a Montessori class for pre-schoolers, or a supervised tot-lot. Other neighborhoods might focus on their unmet transportation needs, for example, and organize regular car pool services to drive residents to shopping areas.

During the preparation of the working Model Street Plans, other City departments would be sensitized to the urban design planning process and asked to aid in achieving the goal of early implementation. The Department of City Planning would serve as departmental coordinator as well as planner, innovator, and advocate. In addition, it would be charged with facilitating actual project implementation.

Model Street Projects, as vehicles for the responsive programming of public services, would emphasize intensive planning and rapid development. They would offer a means of combating the anomie and ennui which is now

destructive of block, street, neighborhood, district, and City improvement efforts. They would reflect an incremental and pragmatic program which the Department of City Planning could initiate, coordinate, and implement. They have the advantage of dealing with discrete segments of the City, in such a way as to include and insure resident participation and departmental responsiveness

Finally, Model Street Projects would assist the Department of City Planning in establishing a unique working relationship between departments delivering line services and an identifiable client constituency at the street level. Such a goal is in accord with the variegated social and physical environment which has long characterized San Francisco's special quality.

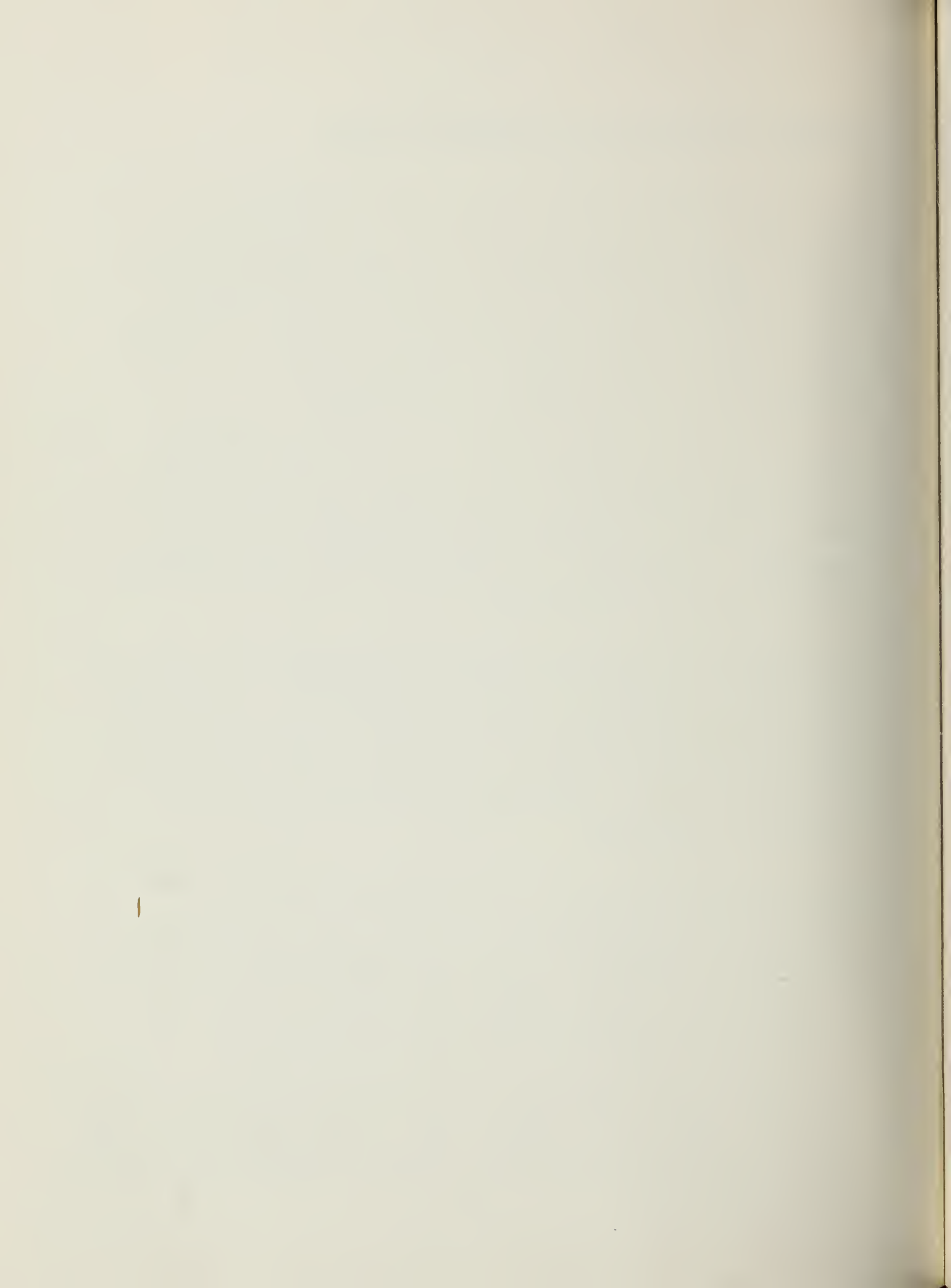
STRUCTURAL REFORM FOR BALANCED COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The need for Charter reform has been recognized for some time. The First Annual Report of the San Francisco Citizens' Charter Revision Committee, in 1969, proposed a thorough revision of the City's organizational structure. It found the Charter too long, ambiguous, hobbled by inadequate fiscal controls, lacking clear definition of responsibility and authority, and inadequate to citizen involvement in City government.

Among a wide range of proposed changes, the Citizens' Charter Revision Committee also recommended the transfer of city planning functions to the Office of the Mayor. A revised Charter was presented to the Board of Supervisors, and submitted to San Francisco voters in the November, 1969 election. Its adoption was defeated.

As a result, the organizational structure of San Francisco's City and County government still continues in substantially the same form. It also continues to permit and even encourage a fractionation of program and function responsibilities which is inappropriate to the exigencies posed by the crises San Francisco faces.

This is partially self-evident in the fact that the organization of San Francisco's City and County government is so complex. Thus, in addition to the Mayor, there are within the Executive Branch six elected officials (Assessor, Treasurer, Sheriff, District Attorney, Public Defender, and City Attorney); the Chief Administrative Officer; the Controller; sixteen Charter boards commissions, most with large departments, including the Department of City Planning; a number of other commissions and committees; nine departments and offices under the Chief Administrative Officer; and four departments under the



Public Utilities Commission. There are also several major special governmental bodies, such as the Redevelopment Agency; and a number of other semi-public non-profit corporations, which are not a part of the City and County government. These do, however, serve and importantly affect San Francisco's well-being.

The Mayor is charged with responsibility for supervising "the administration of all departments under boards and commissions appointed by him," and with coordinating and enforcing "cooperation between all departments of the City and County." It should be apparent that this is an impossible task. The number of units alone with which the Mayor must deal is so large, and their inter-relationships so complex, that they defy effective supervision and coordination. In addition, many of these units enjoy substantial degrees of independence and autonomy. Efficiency suffers and services lag, in the face of the complexities posed by this large number of commissions, boards, committees, agencies, and departments.

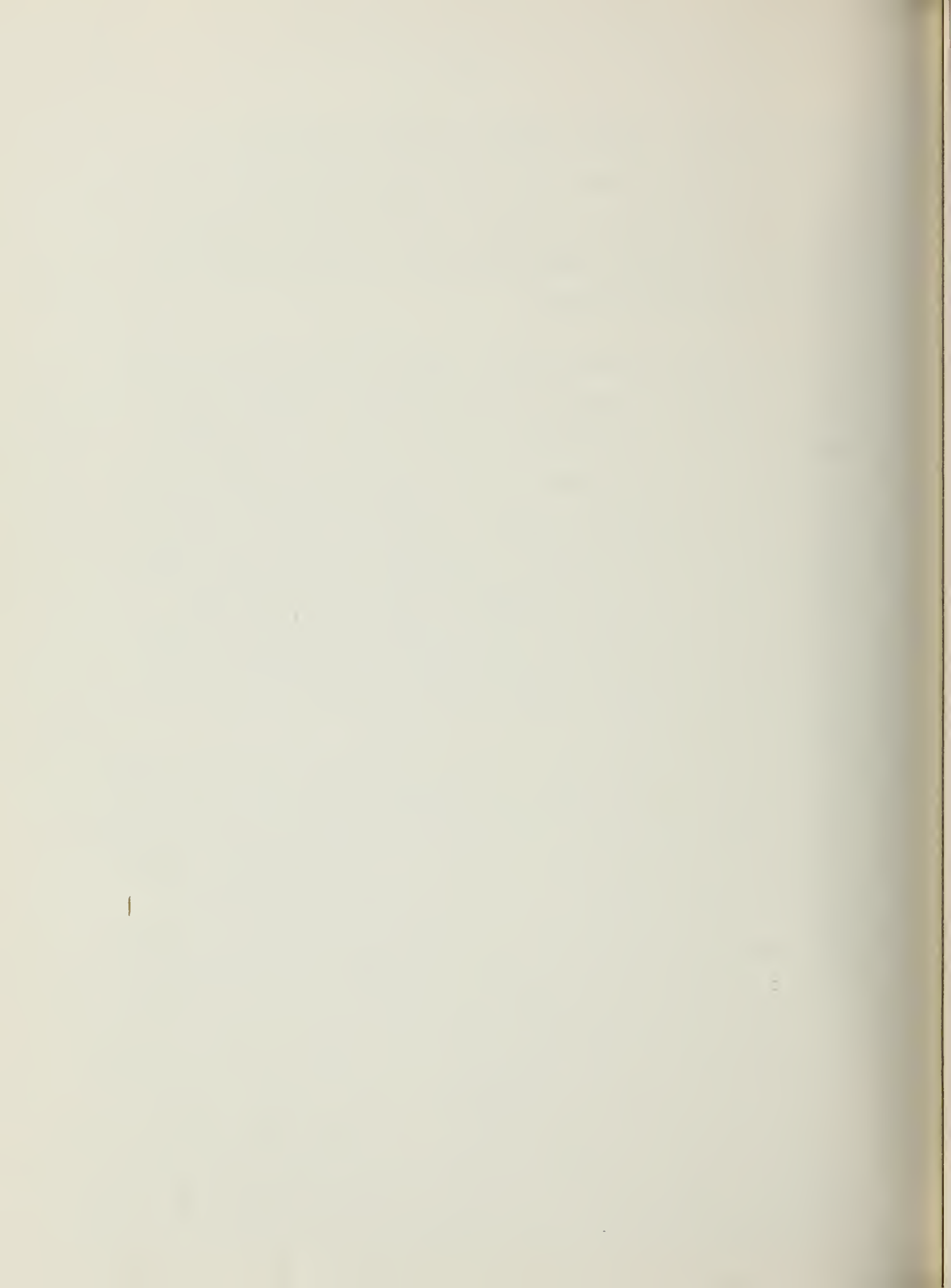
While this suggests a central problem of City and County government, this does not in and of itself identify the deficiencies of the City Planning Commission and its Department of City Planning. Taken together, however, certain structural reforms are recommended.

By itself, the Department of City Planning is responsible for the preparation of the Master Plan, including its Zoning Map component. This responsibility, along with the responsibility for administering the zoning function, reflects the importance of capital improvements and related physical planning to the Department. It also suggests some of the difficulties the Department faces in expanding its scope of planning to cover the social programs which are increasingly important to the character and

texture of the City. Lacking planning oversight with regard to non-capital improvements programs, it is only logical that the City Planning Commission and its Department of City Planning should find it difficult to establish an effective responsibility for and significant impact on the provision of social services.

Nor does any viable mechanism within the Mayor's Office exist to weld the goals and programs of various City departments into a coherent Balanced Comprehensive Plan. Budget review is conducted, but it is frequently policy-weak. The social criteria for the allocation of funds are often poorly defined and arbitrarily applied. The Mayor's control of the City departments which directly report to him tends of necessity to be crisis-oriented, rather than policy-integrated. Intervention into program assumptions and operations often occurs when political pressure reaches the flash point, not when early dysfunctions and inconsistencies first appear.

Given the need for comprehensive, integrated planning in which policy decisions are explicit and form the foundation for program initiation and review, the current structure is clearly inadequate. It lacks a process to integrate the program achievement objectives of various City departments. It lacks a monitoring system capable of developing and utilizing social indicators, and relating them to achievement objectives. It lacks pre-funding policy review within and among City departments. And it lacks an evaluation process which includes a social post-audit, capable of identifying the degree to which programs have achieved short-range objectives. Such an evaluation process is important, whether or not unwanted non-performance outputs have been generated, and regardless of the modifications needed in the attainment of both broad policy goals and detailed achievement objectives.



Office of Planning - To rectify the inadequacies of the existing structure, an expansion in both scope and staff is recommended for the Office of the Mayor. To replace the relative policy vacuum which has existed above department heads, two new functional offices should be created: (1) an Office of Finance, and (2) an Office of Planning. The specific tasks of the two would be different, but complementary.

The proposed Office of Finance would perform a function roughly analogous to the U.S. Bureau of the Budget, now the Office of Management and Budget. In addition to advising the Mayor on the uses of City and County revenues, the Office would analyze and recommend changes in tax structure, review appropriation requests of each City department, and balance budget allocations against over-all City priorities. Fiscal monitoring and evaluation would also be a function of the Office of Finance, along with creating a comprehensive accounting procedure within each department. At heart, the Office of Finance would perform the vital review function of ensuring that each program was being budgeted at a level appropriate to its importance and worth accorded City programs.

The second basic function proposed for the Mayor's Office would be the Office of Planning. Appointment and removal of the Director of Planning would be a Mayoral power, and the present staff of the Department of City Planning would become the basis for the staff of the new Office of Planning. The two main tasks of the Office of Planning would be to integrate the short-term program objectives of operating City departments, and to engage in a comprehensive effort to define the long-range policies and goals toward which immediate objectives would aim. These long-range policy goals and short-term achievement objectives would, in turn, provide the basis for

for selecting a variety of social indicators measuring the State of the City. They would also provide the criteria with which the Office of Finance could monitor and evaluate existing programs.

The jurisdiction of the proposed Office of Planning would extend far beyond that of the current Department of City Planning. Physical planning functions would continue to be addressed, but the major staff activity would be the definition of balanced comprehensive planning goals, the creation of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan embodying these goals, and the coordination and evaluation of the component projects of a wide range of City systems.

The initial task of the Office of Planning would be to develop the major policy goals for each of the City's functional systems. Since these goals would reflect the broadest value decisions about the institutions and services that most directly touch the lives of San Francisco's citizens, their debate and selection should be highly visible and include all interested parties. Department heads of systemic programs could naturally be involved, as well as social service institutions and local universities. Public hearings and neighborhood involvement would also be employed to test and modify initial value judgments. In each systemic area, the task would be to select policy goals which answered the basic question: what sort of education, transportation, welfare, crime prevention, or housing construction public programs and private activities ought to be encouraged? This goes to the question of what sort of city should San Francisco be, and what sort of functional systems are necessary to achieve its desired lifestyle?

The task of defining basic policy goals of this magnitude is admittedly imposing; it is a task which planning in this City has been unable to embrace. It calls for City departments and administrators to engage in utopian planning, a concept which is traditionally suspect and threatening to American pragmatism. Yet, without an explicit and coherent view of the City, functional programs will continue to be directionless and expend scarce resources on inadequate solutions. The definition of broad policy goals will guarantee neither the utility of future projects nor the allocation of adequate resources. It will, however, provide a value-laden touchstone to remind both public officials and private citizens of where the City is going, relative to where it would like to go.

Once basic policy goals are set, the Office of Planning would be responsible for defining the achievement objectives toward which each functional program would aim. As each City department developed its program and budget for the following year, the Office of Planning would serve a review function, requiring the department to make explicit the short-term objectives underlying its proposed program, and to relate those objectives to long-range policy goals.

Review would emphasize integrated planning, and would require that City department programs mesh, that school, park, and police programs, for example, focus on complementary goals, rather than occur in haphazard concert. The review process would thus be shaped by a search for coordination and innovation. Those City department programs which did not accord with policy goals, and fit into the framework of a Balanced Comprehensive Plan for the City, would be recommended by the Office of Planning for revision or rejection. Final decision regarding the allocation of resources

to each department, and among programs would -- of course -- rest with the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors. But as the major social policy arm of the Mayor, the Office of Planning could be expected to have considerable influence over the shape of departmental programs.

Day-to-day responsibility for departmental programs would not shift from City department heads, however, The focus of the Office of Planning would be policy coordination, not operational responsibility. Given the establishment of policy goals and program objectives, the actual management of functional programs would remain the responsibility of departmental staff. The Office of Planning would monitor program operation, but primarily through the device of social indicators. Given, too, established policy goals and achievement objectives, the Office of Planning would be responsible for identifying indices of program impact.

These social and economic indicators could be measured on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis, and would chart the operational achievement of each systemic area. In effect, the monitoring of these indicators would periodically take the pulse of the City, and would help isolate evidence of dysfunction within a City department at an early stage. These indicators would, over time, reveal the dynamics of the social health of the City, much as national economic indicators now provide a picture of the general trends and trouble spots of the economy as a whole.

Social indicators would not only enhance the monitoring of the dynamics of program impact, but would serve as a valuable tool in the broad evaluation role of the Office of Planning. The indicators would be used, together with Social Reconnaissance Surveys, to aid planning staff in the preparation

of an Annual Strategy Statement as part of the State of the City Message. This Statement would detail the changes, innovations, and resources required to attain the achievement objectives of the Balanced Comprehensive Plan.

The Annual Strategy Statement would thus serve as a major evaluation document for the Mayor, and suggest some of the directions to be taken by planning in the coming year. Evaluation and continuing planning would be integrated within a framework of explicit policy goals, and the importance accorded the State of the City Message would broaden the focus of discussion.

The rationale for the transfer of the planning function from the Planning Commission, to a location within the Mayor's Office, is aimed at achieving a number of organizational objectives. The first of these is the achievement of strong executive planning leverage.

Many of the causes of governmental dysfunction may be traced not so much to arbitrary or misused power, but to the existence of a power vacuum at the upper levels of administrative decision-making. Insofar as lines of responsibility are unclear, it becomes increasingly likely that policy decisions will fall in the cracks between the jurisdiction of various departments and officials. Unresponsive government may as easily result from inadequate concentration of power as from autocratic control. It appears that the administrative arm of San Francisco's City and County government needs more, rather than less, control over planning decisions and their implementation.

Placement of the Office of Planning within the Mayor's Office would add



to the power of each. The ability of the Mayor to establish general policy goals for his Administration would be expanded. He would have a staff, responsible to him, whose central tasks would be the definition of long-range goals and more immediate objectives. In addition, the task of coordination and evaluation of program operations among the many City departments reporting to him would be a central responsibility. The planning staff would have a greatly expanded role in developing operational programs. As the focal point for pre-funding policy approval and impact evaluation, the Office of Planning would perform a most vital role in San Francisco's balanced comprehensive planning process.

At present, the influence of the Department of City Planning is restrained by narrow jurisdictional limits, and by its location as a line department of City and County government. The Planning Commission was intended to be an independent body, removed from the pressures and temptations of the political arena. All too often, however, isolation spawns impotence. By locating the Office of Planning within the Mayor's Office, it would be built into the vertical decision-making structure of City government, and built in at the top.

A second organizational objective is to improve the comprehensiveness of planning. Placement of the Office of Planning within the Mayor's Office would also broaden the scope of city planning in San Francisco. Land use planning would remain a task of the planning staff, but to it would be added a wide range of more socially-oriented planning tasks. As an integral and powerful component of the Mayor's Office, the Office of Planning would inject longer range policy and planning goals into departmental decision-making. In addition, it would provide both policy and staff support to the Mayor in an effort to make day-to-day, crisis-oriented

decisions less arbitrary and more consistent with general Administration goals.

Both pre-funding program review, and its monitoring and evaluation functions, would give the Office of Planning leverage to require greater comprehensiveness. Two central criteria for review of each proposed departmental program would be: (1) how well it meshes with long-range policy; and (2) to what degree it is integrated into the achievement objectives of other City departments. Acting as the conduit for departmental funding, the Office of Planning would be in a position to make these evaluations at an early stage in program development, and would have the responsibility to propose improved program delivery. Its staff would also provide support for department heads attempting to shape innovative programs coordinated with the projects of other departments.

A third organizational objective of structural reform is improved accountability. Too often, planning in San Francisco has not been conducted on a comprehensive basis. Each City department tends to engage in planning for its own social programs, with varying degrees of direction from the Mayor's Office. Responsibility for program planning has been both diffuse and over-lapping. As a result, it has been difficult to focus debate on social issues, and pinpoint responsibility for their solution.

Physical planning has been the responsibility of the Department of City Planning which is, in turn, responsible to the Planning Commission. Yet the very organizational decision which gives the existing Department of City Planning independence has removed it from substantial accountability. In both physical and social planning, lines of authority are unclear and policy decisions are largely invisible. As a result, San Franciscans have

only a limited idea of the direction in which their City is moving, and find it difficult to know who is responsible for the selection of that direction.

Restructuring the planning function will not in itself guarantee rational decision-making. It will, however, begin to define clearer lines of responsibility and to clarify the policy decisions which have been made by a particular City department. The creation of a policies plan of long-range goals, and the definition of achievement objectives, will provide an initial focal point for debate. The use of social indicators will be a highly visible activity in the planning process, and should further broaden public awareness of the degree to which the City is meeting its objectives.

The addition of the planning function to the Office of the Chief Executive will greatly strengthen the Mayor's control over and responsibility for systemic operations. The proposed Office of Planning will help shape existing City departments to the basic goals of each elective City administration. Thus, as the Mayor's ability to require departmental consistency increases, so too will his ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of his programs. In the process, the Office of Planning will become more accountable as the direct policy arm of the Mayor. Planning will no longer be an insulated activity, but a live function of the City government. Final responsibility for planning decisions will not rest with an independent commission, but with the Mayor, an elected official directly accountable to all the people of San Francisco.

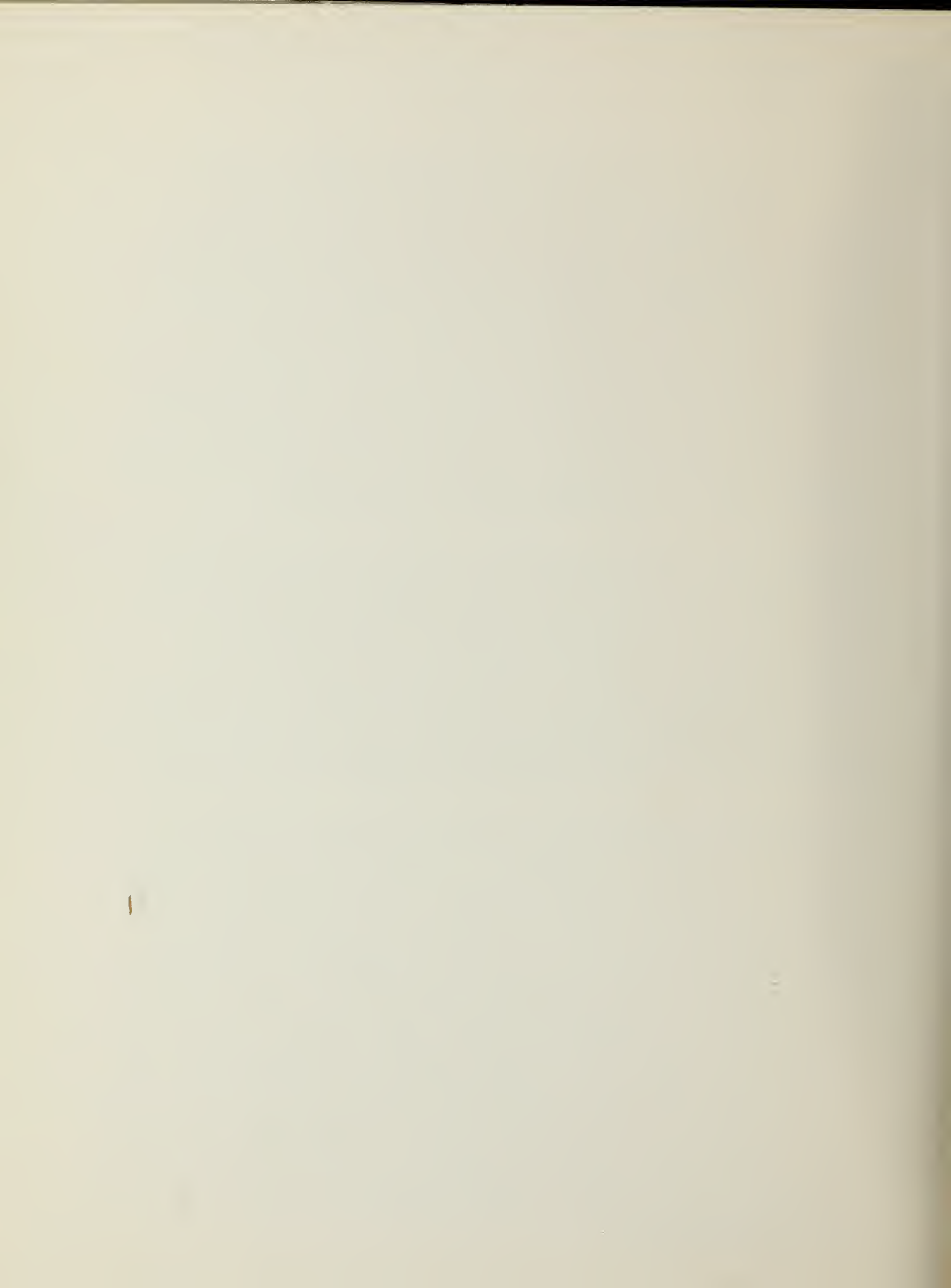
Council of Economic and Social Advisors - One other structural reform is recommended. It covers the proposed establishment of a Mayor's Council of Economic and Social Advisors analogous to the President's Council of



Economic Advisory. Such a Council, whose members would serve at the pleasure of the Mayor, could act as a standing appointive committee for the debate over city policy goals. Its members would be selected, not for their mere economic standing in the City at-large, but for their proven vision and the breadth of their scope. In the process, a new source of innovation and utopianism could be tapped. Optimally, this Council could fill a gadfly role, constantly prodding the Office of Planning and departmental officials to broaden their discussion of organizing goals and values. A three-member structure is recommended.

In effect, the Council of Economic and Social Advisors would fill the non-political role now filled by the City Planning Commission, but at a distance removed from such line functions as zoning designation and review. The Council ought to be constituted in a way which promotes for itself an "ex cathedra" vision and enunciation. No existing unit of San Francisco's City and County government now speaks with this authority.

The Council would, however, have one important regular responsibility, apart from its episodic responsibility as gadfly and prod to better more responsive planning and program delivery. It would be responsible to the Mayor in preparing, with the assistance of the Office of Planning, the Annual Strategy Statement for inclusion in the State of the City Message. This Statement would focus on the use of social indicators to measure the well-being of the City, review program progress and retrograde, and indicate the policy and program steps which are planned to further improve the quality of life of San Francisco's residents. Together, these steps would assist the City in achieving a Balanced Comprehensive Plan for the City and County of San Francisco.





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